

Colorado Watershed Restoration Program Application

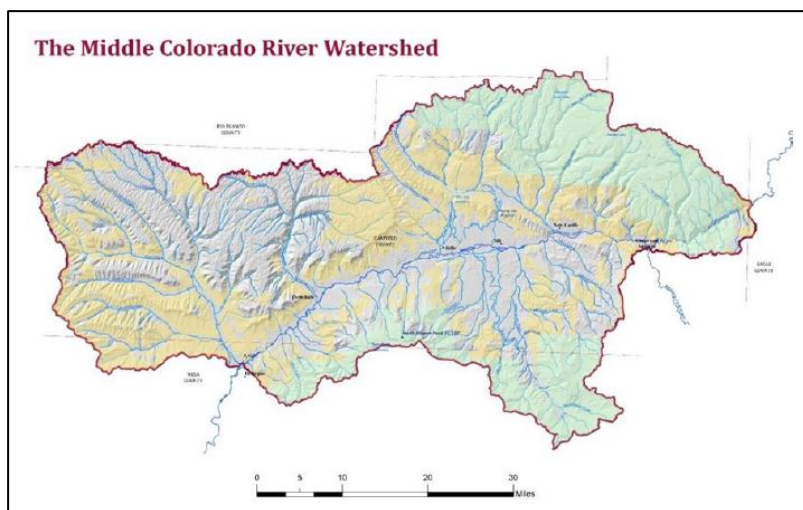


L O C A T I O N	
County/Countries:	Garfield/Mesa
Drainage Basin:	Colorado

D E T A I L S	
Total Project Cost:	\$323,205
Colorado Watershed Restoration Program Request:	\$134,740
Recommended amount:	\$114,500
Other CWCB Funding:	\$27,400 pending
Other Funding Amount:	\$5,000 pending, \$108,065 secured & \$48,000 in-kind
Applicant Match:	
Project Type(s):	Watershed Restoration
Project Category(Categories):	Watershed/Stream Restoration/ IWMP Implementation
Measurable Result:	Invasive species control, boat ramp improvements, river access facility, educational signage, BMPs for FHZs, etc.

A subset of 12 actions from the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP) have been selected for a first phase of plan implementation. These 12 actions address immediate water-related needs ripe for implementation with willing partners actively assembling the necessary resources for execution. Together the actions begin to fill identified gaps in meeting environmental and recreation use needs in the watershed to further the goal of maintaining and enhancing healthy watershed, rivers, and streams.

The Middle Colorado Watershed Council, in partnership with the Mount Sopris, Bookcliff, and South Side Conservations Districts, collaborated on development of an IWMP, which was initiated in 2018.



Stakeholder engagement was extensive over the 30-month planning period, principally utilizing an Advisory Committee platform; open to the public, that met on twelve occasions. The Committee was charged with: 1) understanding water use needs and risks in the watershed through a series of educational and information sharing sessions, 2) developing the scope for technical evaluations on water use needs and gaps, and 3) developing a set of actions intended to meet, offset, or mitigate existing or future water use-related gaps and

needs. Four focus groups were assembled to address the topics of Water Quality and Riparian Areas, Aquatics, Recreation, and Consumptive Uses. A collective set of 55 actions were approved by consensus by the Committee, all of which are considered high priority for implementation.

This first phase of IWMP implementation includes 12 of the high-priority projects identified within the large planning area, extending from Glenwood Canyon to De Beque Canyon, including the six communities of Glenwood Springs, New Castle, Silt, Rifle, Parachute/Battlement Mesa, and De Beque.



COLORADO
Colorado Water
Conservation Board
Department of Natural Resources

Middle Colorado IWMP - Implementation Phase 1 Middle Colorado Watershed Council January 2021 Board Meeting

CWCB staff is recommending funding for nine of 12 high priority projects identified. No funding is recommended for Tasks 2, 4, and 12. CWCB understands the merits and priority of tasks 2 and 4; however, they do not fit well with project types and grant criteria of the Colorado Watershed Restoration Program. The applicant is encouraged to seek other funding sources for these tasks.

Task 12 is related to fire recovery needs for the 2020 Grizzly Creek fire. CWCB staff anticipates a dedicated funding source for 2020 fire recovery projects. The anticipated timeline for this funding source is March-April 2021, however it is pending approval from the General Assembly.

COLORADO WATERSHED RESTORATION PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION

PROJECT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Project Title: Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Plan – Implementation Phase 1

Project Location: Middle Colorado River Watershed (see map below)

Grant Type: Stream Management Plan Grant - Implementation

Grant Request/Amount: \$134,740

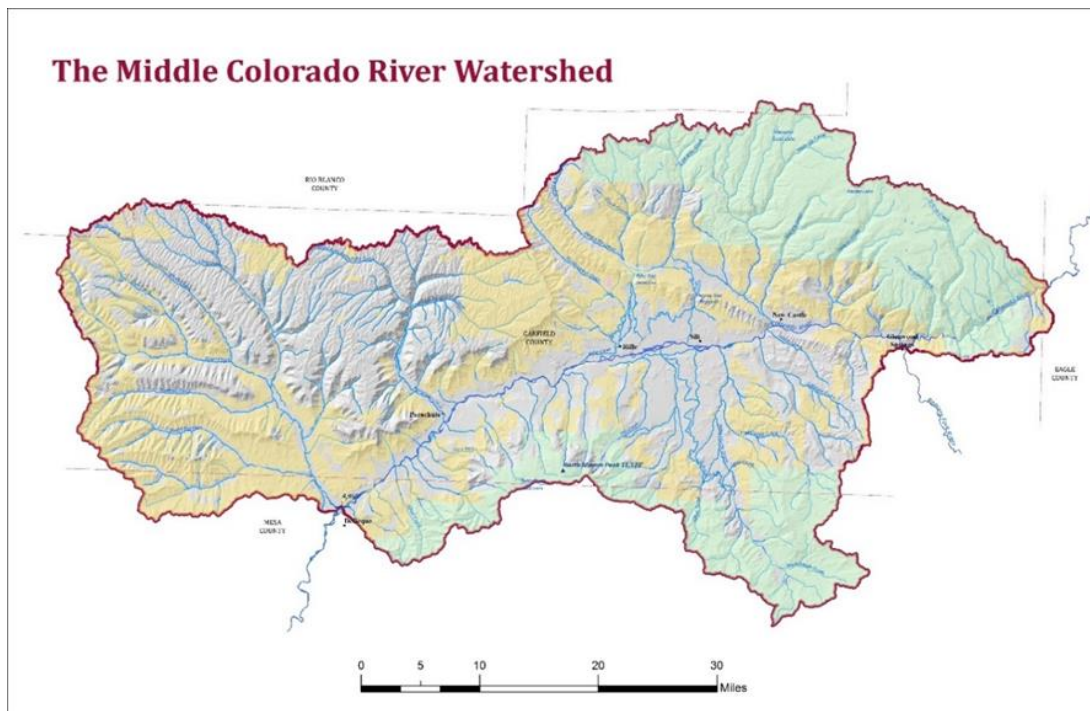
Cash Match Funding: \$135,465

In-kind Match Funding: \$53,000

Project Sponsor: Middle Colorado Watershed Council

Contact: George Wear, MCWC Board Treasurer, 970-274-2466, admin@midcowatershed.org

Brief description of the project: A subset of twelve Actions from the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Plan have been selected for a first phase of plan implementation. These twelve Actions address immediate water-related needs ripe for implementation and are supported by a variety of partners actively assembling the necessary resources for execution. Together the Actions begin to fill identified gaps in meeting environmental and recreation use needs in the watershed to further the goal of maintaining and enhancing healthy watersheds, rivers and streams.



Colorado Watershed Restoration Program Grant Application – Narrative

Background

The Middle Colorado Watershed Council (MCWC) in partnership with the Mount Sopris, Bookcliff and South Side Conservation Districts are currently collaborating on development of an Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP) for the Middle Colorado River Watershed. This effort was initiated in mid-2018 with support from the CWCW Watershed Restoration Program, Water Supply Reserve Funding from the Colorado Basin Roundtable, and contributions from local partners. The planning process is nearing completion with final report development underway.

The planning area is large, extending from Glenwood Canyon to De Beque Canyon, including the six communities of Glenwood Springs, New Castle, Silt, Rifle, Parachute/Battlement Mesa, and De Beque (see map Attachment A). Environmental and recreational use needs and gaps were evaluated with a focus on the mainstem of the middle Colorado River. Consumptive use needs and gaps were evaluated for municipal, agricultural, and industrial interests, expanding into the tributaries of the middle river.

Stakeholder engagement has been extensive over the 30-month planning period, principally utilizing an Advisory Committee platform, open to the public, that met on twelve occasions. The Committee was charged with: 1) understanding water use needs and risks in the watershed through a series of educational and information sharing sessions, 2) developing the scope for technical evaluations on water use needs and gaps, and 3) developing a set of Actions intended to meet, offset or mitigate existing or future water use-related gaps and needs. This diverse group included representatives from all major water user and management sectors: municipal and local governments; federal and state natural resource agencies; national, state, and regional NGOs; water conservancy districts; conservation districts; energy industry; local universities; local outfitters/guides; special interest groups; and technical consultants. A complete list of meeting attendees is provided in Attachment B. The Committee developed a mission statement to guide the planning process as well as a set of overarching goals.

Mission Statement:

To improve security for all water uses in the Middle Colorado River by understanding and protecting existing uses, meeting shortages, and promoting healthy riverine ecosystems and agriculture in the face of increased future demand and climate uncertainty.

Goals:

- ✓ *Foster a collaborative approach to water management through shared stewardship.*
- ✓ *Protect existing water uses and secure future water supplies.*
- ✓ *Maintain, or enhance where appropriate, healthy watersheds, rivers and streams.*
- ✓ *Enhance and promote responsible recreational use of local streams and rivers.*
- ✓ *Promote, preserve, and protect agriculture.*
- ✓ *Increase resiliency in the regional water supply.*
- ✓ *Promote a resilient and diverse economy.*
- ✓ *Plan to adaptively meet impacts of a changing climate.*

Four focus groups were assembled to address the topics of Water Quality and Riparian Areas, Aquatics, Recreation, and Consumptive Uses; the groups collectively met on twenty-three occasions. Each group was charged with identifying a set of objectives that would meet the overarching goals set forth by the Advisory Committee and to develop a set of recommended Actions to meet the objectives. Each group presented a set of priority Actions to the Advisory Committee for its consensus approval. A collective set

of fifty-five Actions were approved by consensus by the Committee, all of which are considered high priority for implementation.

Purpose of Work

The proposal submitted herein has selected a **subset of twelve Actions to undertake over the next three-years** as a first phase of IWMP implementation. The list of twelve Actions was selected according to a few criteria.

- ✓ Actions that address an immediate set of needs;
- ✓ Actions that together, through a multi-objective approach, address an integration of environmental, recreational and consumptive use needs;
- ✓ Actions that are ripe for implementation by way of resource availability with support from a broad base of partnerships; and
- ✓ Actions that compliment each other and benefit from efficiencies and synergies.

The twelve actions are listed below -- more detailed descriptions can be found in the attached Scope of Work as well as in the [IWMP Action Plan](#) (draft in review – cross-referencing number provided below).

1. Riparian Restoration and Invasives Control (WQR3)
2. Pilot Local Market for Agricultural Products (CONS7)
3. Improvements Silt Boat Ramp (REC2)
4. River Access Facility Improvements (REC8)
5. Best Practices for Gravel Pit Reclamation (AQ9)
6. Pilot Gravel Pit Reclamation (WQR4)
7. Educational Signage Nonnative Transport (AQ5)
8. Landowner Outreach for Fishery Best Management Practices (AQ10)
9. Citizen Science to Track Invasives (AQ11)
10. Participation in Flow Management Partnerships (AQ7)
11. Best Management Practices for Floodplain Uses (WQR10)
12. Collaborative Post-Fire Watershed Management (AQ6)

Qualifications Evaluation

Lead Project Sponsor

MCWC is the lead project sponsor and will assume responsibility as project manager and fiscal agent. MCWC was organized in 2013 as a local, nonprofit 501(c)3 with the mission to evaluate, protect and enhance the middle section of the Colorado River through the cooperative efforts of diverse stakeholders. The organization is managed by a nine-member volunteer board of directors that utilizes a number of advisory committees to inform its operations. The geographic focus is on the “middle” section of the Colorado River, a 2,000 square-mile area that includes 75 miles of the Colorado River mainstem and a host of tributaries spanning from the head of Glenwood Canyon to De Beque Canyon, most of which lies in Garfield County.

Participating Stakeholders

MCWC, as the lead project sponsor, will be interacting with a broad and diverse set of partners to implement the twelve actions. Following is a full list of partners organized by implementing, advisory, or post-fire ad hoc committee roles. Action-specific detail on partners is more fully described in the attached Scope of Work. Letter of support from partners are contained in Attachment D.

Implementing Partners: Town of Silt, Aspen Valley Land Trust, Highwater Farm, Garfield County, Mesa County, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers (RFOV), Greater Rifle Improvement Team, a local university, and local gravel pit owners/operators.

Advisory Partners: CPW, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCW) Watershed Health Engineering Services, Colorado State University, Colorado Division of Mining, Reclamation and Safety, Trout Unlimited, American Whitewater, RiversEdge West.

Candidate Partners for Post-Fire Restoration Ad Hoc Coalition: City of Glenwood, Town of De Beque, BLM, U.S. Forest Service, CPW, Colorado Department of Transportation, NRCS, Bookcliff Conservation District, Bluestone Conservation District, Colorado River District, U.S. Geological Survey, Garfield County, Mesa County, CWCW, Eagle River Watershed Council, RFOV, Shoshone (Xcel), Cameo (Grand Valley Water Users), Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Cash Contributions and In-Kind Services from Project Partners

Contributing Entity	Amount and Form of Match	Status	Action Item No.
Town of Silt	\$10,000 cash	Committed	1
Town of Silt	\$5,000 in-kind	Committed	1, 4 and 7
Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers	\$3,000 cash	Grant request pending	1
Aspen Valley Land Trust	\$65,065 cash	Grant request pending	1
NRCS/Southside Conservation District	\$5,000 cash	Grant application Spring 2021	1
Highwater Farm	\$25,000 cash	Grant request pending	2
Colorado Water Plan Fund	\$27,400 cash	Grant application Dec 2020	3
Donated staff hours (municipal and county government, natural resource agencies)	\$18,000 in-kind	Committed, see letters of support	4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11
Donated staff/legal hours to forming post-fire ad hoc coalition	\$30,000 in-kind	Commitments to be secured	12
Total Match	\$188,465		

Organizational Capability

MCWC History of Accomplishments in Watershed

Examples of organizational accomplishments are summarized as follows:

- *Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Plan.* 2018 to present. Collaborative planning process conducted in partnership with the Mount Sopris, Bookcliff, and South Side Conservation Districts. Funded by CWCW Watershed Restoration Program, Colorado Basin Roundtable, and local entities. See prior descriptions.
- *River Stop Interpretive Center.* 2018 to present. Colorado River educational facility located at the I-70 and Rifle Interchange along the river. Phase I is complete and open to the public (limited

access per COVID restrictions). Funded by CWCB Water Plan Grant and local donations and completed in partnership with the City of Rifle.

- *Bureau of Land Management Watershed Activities.* 2014 to present. Cooperative Agreement with BLM to support on-going watershed planning, restoration and monitoring activities. Current work includes design and construction of a fish passage structure on East Divide Creek and design work for installation of a fish barrier on Roan Creek in partnership with CPW.
- *Middle Colorado River Watershed Plan.* 2013 to 2016. Funded by the Colorado Nonpoint Source Pollution Control program. Work guided by a stakeholder committee of technical experts.
- *Riparian restoration and invasives control projects.* 2013 – present. Funded by various sources with technical assistance from Garfield County. Includes work at Rifle Interchange/Lions Pond Rest Area, Wheeler State Wildlife Area at Silt, Mamm Creek on private lands, and Butler Creek on USFS lands.
- *Citizen Science Water Quality Monitoring and associated projects.* 2015 – 2018. Included investigations of water quality impairments in Rifle Creek basin and a partnership with River Watch Colorado in collection of baseline water quality data on a number of tributaries using citizen science and high-school youth teams. Funded by BLM, the BOR Cooperative Watershed Management Program, the Colorado Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program, and local foundations.

Project Staffing

Project management will be conducted by the MCWC Executive Director. As of November 5, 2020, the MCWC Board is nearly complete with the final round of interviews to refill this position. A resume of the new ED will be provided once the position is filled. A total of 919 staff hours, expended over a three-year period, are budgeted for this phase and will be fulfilled by the ED or other staff they supervise.

Laurie Rink, Project Manager for the IWMP, will act in an advisory capacity to the ED, providing information that will enhance the transition from planning to implementation during this first phase. Educated as a scientist, Laurie has worked in the field of aquatic ecology and restoration for over thirty-five years with specific expertise in watershed management, wetland ecology, water quality assessment, and regulatory compliance.

Additional funds for technical consultants have been allocated as described in the scope of work. Donated staff time as matching in-kind is listed on the previous page.

Project Budget and Schedule

Action	Description	Target Start Date	Target Complete Date	CWCB Funds	Other Funding Cash	Other Funding In-Kind	Totals
1	Riparian Restoration and Invasives Control	April 2022	March 2023	\$18,600	\$83,065	\$2,500	\$104,165
2	Pilot Local Market for Agricultural Products	April 2021	March 2023	\$5,000	\$25,000		\$30,000
3	Improvements Silt Boat Ramp	April 2021	Sept 2023		\$27,400		\$27,400
4	River Access Facility Improvements	April 2021	March 2024	\$6,600		\$5,000	\$11,600
5	Best Practices for Gravel Reclamation	April 2021	Sept 2023	\$19,600		\$3,000	\$22,600

6	Pilot Gravel Pit Reclamation	Sept 2021	March 2024	\$6,000			\$6,000
7	Educational Signage Nonnative Transport	April 2021	March 2023	\$11,500		\$4,500	\$16,000
8	Landowner Outreach for Fishery Best Management Practices	April 2021	March 2023	\$6,000		\$1,000	\$7,000
9	Citizen Science to Track Invasives	April 2021	March 2024	\$11,800		\$3,000	\$14,800
10	Participation in Flow Mgmt Partnerships	April 2021	March 2024	\$9,000			\$9,000
11	Best Management Practices for Floodplain Uses	Sept 2021	Sept 2023	\$32,000		\$4,000	\$36,000
12	Collaborative Post-Fire Watershed Mgmt	April 2021	June 2021	\$8,640		\$30,000	\$38,640
	TOTALS			\$134,740	\$135,465	\$53,000	\$323,205

Proposal Effectiveness

Supporting Plans and Evaluations

The Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Plan serves as the supporting document for the planning and evaluation process and includes several appendices presenting results of associated technical analyses. A copy of the review DRAFT can be accessed [HERE](#).

The IWMP Action Plan can be used as an abbreviated reference document that focusses on a presentation of all fifty-five Action items. Each Action item is categorized as a Project, Initiative or Study and given an identifying number according to the focus group from which it originated (i.e., Water Quality/Riparian (WQR), Aquatic (AQ), Recreation (REC), Consumptive (CONS). Each Action is described in a one-page cut-sheet format that includes: 1) a basic description, 2) its geographic area of application, 3) the specific objectives it addresses, 4) the likely organizing entity, 5) principle partners, 6) opportunities, constraints and challenges associated with implementation, 7) implementation steps, 8) evaluation criteria, and 9) estimated costs. It is also in review as a DRAFT and can be accessed [HERE](#).

Implementation Objectives

The IWMP focus group process collectively identified twenty-nine objectives for meeting the IWMP goals, seventeen of which will be addressed, in part, by the proposed Phase I implementation work. Please refer to the attached Scope of Services for a listing of the seventeen objectives with notes on associated Actions. More information on how the IWMP mission, goals, and objectives were developed and how they relate to the selection of implementation Actions can be found in the IWMP planning documents accessed [HERE](#).

Monitoring Plan

Please refer to the [IWMP Action Plan](#) to view cut-sheets for each Action where monitoring and evaluation criteria are described.

Scope of Work

Grantee and Fiscal Agent: Middle Colorado Watershed Council

Primary Contact: George Wear, Treasurer – admin@midcowatershed.org

Address: 200 Lions Park Circle, Rifle, CO 81650

Phone: 970-274-2466

Project Name: Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Plan – Implementation Phase 1

Grant Amount: \$134,740

Introduction and Background

A subset of twelve Actions from the Middle Colorado Integrated Water Management Plan have been selected for a first phase of plan implementation. These twelve Actions address immediate water-related needs ripe for implementation with willing partners actively assembling the necessary resources for execution. Together the Actions begin to fill identified gaps in meeting environmental and recreation use needs in the watershed to further the goal of maintaining and enhancing healthy watersheds, rivers and streams.

Objectives

The Middle Colorado IWMP identified 29 objectives. A **total of 17 out of the 29** will be addressed, in part, by the Phase I implementation work, as follows. Actions that address each objective are noted.

- Maintain healthy, productive aquatic communities of native and other desirable species at viable population levels commensurate with the species' and habitats' potential (Actions 5, 8, 9 and 12).
- Restore stream network connectivity for native warmwater fish and cold-water sport fish along the mainstem Colorado River and lower segments of tributary streams (Action 10).
- Conserve and/or recover ESA-listed species and the ecosystems on which they depend through on-going, conservation activities (Actions 5, 7, 8, 9 and 12).
- Maintain or enhance special status species and their habitats to provide for on-going conservation and recovery (Action 12).
- Reduce or eliminate threats to sensitive species to minimize the likelihood of and need for listing of these species under the ESA (Actions 5, 7, 8, 9 and 12).
- Sustain ongoing monitoring and research efforts characterizing native fish and invasive fish abundance and range throughout the watershed (Actions 9 and 10).
- Enhance community awareness of state and federal fishery management objectives and the critical role that individuals can play in meeting those objectives (Actions 5, 7, 8, 9 and 12).
- Protect areas of contiguous riparian habitat from future degradation or loss (Actions 1 and 11).
- Reduce acreage of riparian area functionally degraded by invasive plants (Action 1).
- Increase the acreage of contiguous high-quality riparian habitat (Actions 1, 6 and 11).
- Restore and preserve the connectivity between the river and the functional floodplain (Actions 1, 6 and 11).
- Increase community awareness of the consequences of water management decision-making for human and natural systems (Action 11).
- Enhance opportunities for day and overnight floating activities (Action 3).
- Minimize conflicts among recreation visitors, between recreation visitors and other users of the river, and with private landowners (Action 4).
- Limit recreational impacts on areas of significant cultural, historic, biological and conservation value (Action 4).

- Add or maintain contributions to the local economy and support local businesses in the Middle Colorado River Reach (Actions 3 and 4).
- Enhance market opportunities and flexibility for water use/management by agricultural producers (Action 2).

Actions

Action 1: Riparian Restoration and Invasives Control (WQR3) – Focus Silt River Preserve.

Purchased with the help of GOCO funding in 2009, the 132-acre Silt River Preserve is now owned by the Town of Silt and conserved through the Aspen Valley Land Trust (AVLT). Once heavily grazed and later identified as part of a proposed 2,000-unit development along 0.6 miles of the Colorado River, this land is relatively degraded, but with excellent restoration potential to become a natural, riverside park. The preserve provides habitat and first-class wildlife viewing opportunities for bald eagles, great blue herons, osprey, turkeys, deer, mink, river otter, and more. It has been largely underutilized by the public until the pandemic and has recently experienced a dramatic increase of use by families seeking nature trails and quiet open space. Work on the property completed over the last few years through collaborative partnerships has included removal of tamarisk and Russian olive, improved irrigation efficiency on hay fields, the installation of informal nature trails, and initial offerings for youth outdoor education programs on ecology and land stewardship. See Attachment C for a site layout and noxious weed map.

Description of Action: Funds requested through this application will be used to determine how pre-compact water rights can be used for habitat restoration efforts and to sustain existing and future opportunities for agricultural leases that support innovative approaches to addressing local food security (see Action 2).

Matching funding will be used as follows: 1) to work with partners at the Silt River Preserve on ecological restoration through secondary invasive weed control, native understory revegetation, and riparian and wetland habitat restoration, and 2) to create an outdoor classroom space with shade and restrooms for use by local schools, nonprofit partners, and other community groups.

Method/Procedure: An engineer will be retained to evaluate the Town's water rights portfolio for the property and to develop a water delivery rehabilitation and application plan to facilitate habitat restoration, secure water needs for current ag leases at the property, and evaluate the potential for expanded ag leases. The evaluation will utilize the South Side Conservation District infrastructure inventories completed for both the Rising Sun and Last Chance ditches that flow through the property.

Secondary weed control will be accomplished through the application of integrated weed management practices and native reseeding using Goats Green LLC. Intensive and rotational grazing including incorporation of native overseeding will occur over a three-year period. DHM Design will be retained to create a riparian and wetland habitat restoration plan and outdoor classroom design. Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers (RFOV) will be deployed to complete additional trail work and site clean-up (e.g., removal of old fencing, etc.). Interpretive signage and outdoor classroom facilities will be developed and installed.

Deliverables: (for cash request)

- Water rights evaluation and plan for rehabilitation of existing water diversion and delivery structures plus construction cost estimate

(associated with match)

- 3-year Integrated Weed Management Program (Town of Silt and AVL T)
- Riparian and wetland restoration design plan and cost estimate (Town of Silt and AVL T)
- Volunteer day for site maintenance and clean-up (RFOV)
- Educational interpretive signage plus outdoor classroom support facilities (Town of Silt and AVL T)

Action 2: Pilot Local Market for Agricultural Products (CONS7) – Focus Silt River Preserve. Silt River Preserve is also home to Highwater Farm, a nonprofit community farm that seeks to employ local high school students, with an emphasis on diversity and equity, to help grow vegetables, learn job and life skills, and in turn donate a portion of their harvest to local food banks addressing an acute and now growing food insecurity problem in the region. Highwater Farm has persevered through their first year of operations despite this pandemic, and has been recognized for engaging and feeding an often-overlooked and vulnerable part of this community

Description of Action: Funds requested through this application will be used to support Highwater Farm staff in outreach to and coordination with other local producers to expand market offerings using a Community Support Agriculture (CSA) template. This will include engaging a community process that could result in a shared processing facility or market space.

Matching funds raised by Highwater Farm will help provide the needed infrastructure for Highwater Farm to complete their vision for community engagement and food production. Community farm infrastructure improvements currently planned include irrigation upgrades, a shade structure for classes, and hedgerow windbreaks for crops.

Method/Procedure: Opportunities and challenges for enhanced market development will be assessed through communications with other producers in the geographic region. The Colorado Agricultural Commission will be contacted to learn about emerging opportunities for innovation that support development of local markets. Opportunities for on-site increased ag land leasing will be investigated along with the availability of water to support additional operations (see Action 1).

**Deliverable:
(for cash request)**

- Written report on results of outreach/coordination efforts, recommended next steps, identification of needed resources, and suggested partnerships.

(for cash match)

- Farm infrastructure upgrades to increase production capacity (Highwater Farm)

Action 3: Improvements Silt Boat Ramp (REC2). Silt Island Park currently contains two gravel/dirt boat ramps and day-use picnic facilities. This boat launch has experienced a rapid increase in user traffic over the last few years as its popularity has increased, anglers are pushed to new locations when fishing closures arise, and with pandemic-era use. The launch area can only accommodate one to two vehicles at a time depending upon flow conditions. The vehicular approach to the launch area is limited by a single lane dirt road that connects to a large parking area, resulting in traffic flow issue involving vehicles and vehicles towing boat trailers.

Description of Action: Matching funds from the Colorado Water Plan grant program will be used to develop an enlarged and improved launch, circulation, and parking area design.

Method/Procedure: An engineer will be retained to complete the design work and to advise regarding necessary permits and construction costs. The design will need to consider a sensitive approach that minimizes impacts to riparian vegetation and maintains streambank and channel integrity. The engineer will work closely with Town of Silt staff on design elements as the Town will likely be using its staff and equipment to complete a portion of the construction.

Deliverable:
(associated with match)

- Design plan sufficient for determining construction costs and to acquire permits

Action 4: River Access Facility Improvements (REC8). The Middle Colorado IWMP has identified several opportunities for expanded and new river access between Glenwood and De Beque to support efforts of local communities to provide river access for its residents and visitors. River access points provide an excellent opportunity for posting information to educate river visitors on river ecology, safety, use etiquette, and stewardship. Using common branding and messaging between access location can be most effective when communicating with the public. Providing for common amenities like picnic tables, trash receptacles, and restroom will work to minimize impacts of river visitors on private property.

Description of Action: Coordinate the development of branded messaging and a recommended list of facilities that should be considered at existing and future river access points in the watershed. Based upon results, install prototype messaging at Silt Island Park boat ramp (see Action 3).

Method/Procedure: Engage members of the Middle Colorado IWMP Recreation Focus Group to participate in developing common branding, standard messages and construction standards for future educational signage and site amenities. Work with the forum organized by the Greater Rifle Improvement Team (GRIT) to build upon existing working relationships between communities. Utilize American Whitewater Open Source Tool Box as a planning resource.

Create prototype messaging for Silt Island Park and install concurrent with park improvements.

Deliverable:
(for cash request)

- Formatted graphics, narrative, and specifications for educational signage.
- Suggested design specifications for common river access amenities.
- Three manufactured prototype signs.

(associated with match)

- Three signs installed at Silt Island Park by Town of Silt staff.

Action 5: Best Practices for Gravel Pit Reclamation (AQ9). Gravel pits throughout the watershed have been documented to support nonnative fish that regularly escape to the mainstem Colorado River and compete with native river fishes. Current state and local mining regulations do not require full mitigation for habitat or resource losses or the issues posed by creating nonnative fish habitat. Although legally augmented, the resulting open water bodies additionally evaporate valuable Colorado River water.

Description of Action: Develop best practices for reclamation of completed gravel operations for use in development reviews by the counties and local governments.

Method/Procedure: Coordinate with natural resource agencies (CPW, BLM, USFWS), NGOs (TU, REW) and interested parties to compile a list of recommended best practices for gravel mine

reclamation that serve to offset or mitigate identified issues. Incorporate reclamation techniques that minimize opportunities for nonnative fish reproduction and spread, minimize water losses due to open water evaporation, and maximize regeneration of riparian communities. Gather input from the regulated industry to explore and establish feasible practices. Present work product to Garfield and Mesa counties and local municipalities for use in reviewing future mine permit applications. Communicate results to Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety.

Deliverable:
(for cash request)

- Handbook of best practices for gravel mining operations in Middle Colorado Watershed

Action 6: Pilot Gravel Pit Reclamation (WQR4). This Action builds upon Action 5 by engaging with existing and potentially new gravel pits operations in the Silt area to pilot best practices for reclamation. Two existing operations are located adjacent to the Silt River Preserve while a third property, an island in the river upstream of the Preserve, is slated for extraction. A fourth operation, the Mamm Creek Pits, are located somewhat downstream of Silt.

Description of Action: Engage gravel pit operators in discussions to convey stakeholder concerns and issues with current, standard gravel pit reclamation techniques and to explore opportunities for piloting alternatives techniques.

Method/Procedure: Contact the four owner/operators mentioned above to explore willingness and interest in examining the feasibility of alternative methods and practices for reclamation. Initiate discussions on piloting opportunities, discuss scope of efforts, develop preliminary cost estimates, and explore funding resources to support piloting. Include CPW aquatics staff in discussions as an advisory entity.

Deliverables:
(for cash request)

- Technical memorandum documenting the result of outreach and engagement efforts with the four entities. If results are fruitful, the memo will serve as documentation to support implementation next steps.

Action 7: Educational Signage Nonnative Transport (AQ5). Non-native fish introduced into the Colorado River mainstem negatively impact native fishes through predation and competition for resources. Nonnative fish, for example northern pike and smallmouth bass, are known to escape private ponds with hydrologic connections to the Colorado River or are illegally relocated from managed sport fisheries (i.e., reservoirs) to the river. As described in Action 5, gravel pits can serve as breeding grounds for non-natives. Education through location-focused signage can help mitigate the problem.

Description of Action: Develop and install signage around gravel pits, public ponds, boat ramps, and river access area in the Silt-area indicating prohibition against moving nonnative fish, bullfrogs and other aquatic species between waterbodies.

Method/Procedure: Develop an inventory of locations for sign installation in the Silt geographic area and select the top ten. Consult with CSU on research results regarding the social aspects of working with the public on non-natives control for any insight on effective communication methods. Work with CPW staff to develop and vet sign text and graphics. Contract for fabrication of ten signs to serve as prototype for rest of watershed area.

Deliverables:
(for cash request)

- Prototype messaging text and graphics for watershed-wide use
- Ten fabricated signs

(associated with match)

- Ten signs installed in Silt area by Town of Silt staff

Action 8: Landowner Outreach for Fishery Best Management Practices (AQ10). Private lakes and ponds can be sources of non-native fish which are problematic for native fish in the middle Colorado River watershed as described in Action 7. Private landowners can implement best management practices to minimize the unintended consequences of breeding non-native fish if properly informed. Outreach will include educational information about obtaining a stocking permit, isolating nonnatives, prohibiting movement of nonnatives from pond to river or off-property, drying ponds out annually to minimize reproduction of invasive species, etc.

Description of Action: Deliver targeted outreach to private landowners about best practices for fishery management. Target the Glenwood to Silt reach of the mainstem Colorado River.

Method/Procedure: Focus effort on landowners adjacent to the river with existing ponds. Coordinate with CPW staff to develop a list of best practices for private pond management. Translate information into meaningful and understandable text and tools for private landowner use. Consult with CSU on research results regarding social aspects of working with the public on non-natives control to ascertain the best methods for communication. Analyze county records in association with aerial photography to derive a list of property/owners for targeted outreach from Glenwood to Silt. Conduct one on one outreach efforts with up to twenty parties.

Deliverables:
(for cash request)

- Outreach materials (handbook, pamphlets, or other) in printed and on-line form
- Up to twenty site visits to disseminate materials

Action 9: Citizen Science to Track Invasives (AQ11). Invasive aquatic species, particular fish, are an ongoing threat to maintaining healthy populations of native fish, including federally threatened and endangered species (see related work in Actions 5, 6, 7 and 8). An interactive application for use on personal electronic devices will be developed to educate a specific sector of the public on the harmful impacts of nonnatives while allowing for the collection of citizen science-based data for use by resource managers. The app will provide descriptive data and photos to help anglers, recreational boaters and other river users identify and differentiate native and sport fish from nonnative invasive species, provide information on what to do if one is hooked or captured, and give the user the ability to report its location and findings in real time. Aquatic resource managers can review data to learn more about the geographic extent of and current location of invasive species they can subsequently target for mechanical or chemical removal.

Description of Action: Develop a free application for use by anglers that allows for timely reporting of captured nonnative invasive species, for example Northern Pike, Bullfrogs, invasive aquatic plants, etc. and any new, emerging species. Functionality would be provided to identify and report on capture and release of endangered fishes.

Method/Procedures: Partner with a local university for staff and student assistance with development and testing of the application. Collaborate with CPW on application functionality

requirements. Develop, pilot and refine the app with assistance of local guides/outfitters. Market the free app through local guides and equipment outlets.

Deliverables:
(for cash request)

- Electronic application available through the public domain for free download

Action 10: Participation in Flow Management Partnerships (AQ7, REC13, WQR8). Seasonal and periodic flow needs and thresholds for the mainstem of the middle Colorado River were developed as part of the IWMP process for the protection of environmental and recreational uses. The Historic User Pool, Coordinated River Operations, and the Upper Colorado River Wild and Scenic Stakeholders Group through its Cooperative Measures Committee are just a few examples of groups that meet on a regular basis to discuss coordinated water management opportunities for balancing a number of water uses and interests in the Colorado River basin. These forums provide the opportunity for exchanging technical information regarding water needs and timing that could benefit the middle Colorado River.

Description of Action: Provide local representation at: 1) Historic User Pool, 2) Coordinated River Operations, 3) Upper Colorado Wild and Scenic Stakeholder forums, 4) future Demand Management forums, and 5) global water settlements to advocate for annual water management scenarios that benefit the middle Colorado River mainstem. Funding is requested for a three-year period.

Method/Procedure: Use IWMP-generated flow thresholds to inform recommendations that could consider timed releases in spring to inhibit smallmouth bass reproduction, timed releases during peak runoff to enhance opportunities for channel maintenance and riparian regeneration, and releases to mitigate effects of post-wildfire runoff. Provide input on implementing operational BMPs at Shoshone to minimize impacts from flushing sediment from behind the dam and to protect fish from stranding or flushing with drastic changes to flow. Provide periodic reports to Garfield County Commissioners (through Garfield County Water Forum) regarding partnership outcomes.

Deliverables:
(for cash request)

- Technical memorandum summarizing meetings attended, specific management requests made and responses to those requests, final outcomes that provided benefit to the middle Colorado River, and recommendations regarding future participation in current forums.

Action 11: Best Management Practices for Floodplain Uses (WQR10). A Fluvial Hazard Zone (FHZ) map has been developed for the middle Colorado River as an IWMP deliverable. FHZ mapping is a component of the Colorado Hazard Mapping Program effort underway by the CWCB in partnership with the Colorado Geological Survey, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, and local governments. An understanding of the components of an FHZ can elucidate the need for carefully crafted use regulations to reduce risk to life, property, and river function.

Description of Action: Develop a set of recommended best management practices that can be used by municipal and county governments as a companion reference document to IWMP FHZ mapping to improve local management decisions related to floodplain development and uses.

Method/Procedure: Engage a technical consultant to assist in the compilation of a set of best management practices (BMPs) that can be applied to the different fluvial hazard types identified in the IWMP-generated FHZ mapping for the middle Colorado River mainstem from Glenwood

to De Beque. Coordinate with Garfield County staff and natural resource management agencies (CPW, BLM, NRCS) on BMP language development and its application under current code with an eye towards integration into future code and zoning updates. Utilize CWCB Watershed Health Engineering Services and materials generated through the CWCB Hazard Mapping Program as a resource. Meet with Garfield and Mesa Board of County Commissioners and municipal boards to inform on mapping and BMP products and recommended use.

Deliverables:

(for cash request)

- Handbook of Best Management Practices for use in association with FHZ mapping for the middle Colorado River

Action 12: Collaborative Post-Fire Watershed Management (AQ6). Both the Grizzly Creek and Pine Gulch fires of 2020 occurred within the middle Colorado Watershed. Post-fire recovery and rehabilitation in the burn areas will be needed to reduce the risk of well-known post-fire hazards, such as flooding and erosion/debris flows that can have devastating effects on human life and infrastructure as well as acute and chronic effects on water quality and availability, affecting potable drinking water sources, irrigation needs, and aquatic biota health. Recognizing that no single entity has jurisdiction over the two immediate burned areas of initial focus, a coalition of interests can provide a forum for individual stakeholders, both public and private, to discuss actions, arrive at consensus, and implement solutions to address the most vulnerable areas and natural resource assets.

Description of Action: Take immediate and initial steps in organizing an ad hoc coalition (or two – one for each sub-basin) to serve as a post-fire planning and coordination hub that bridges individual entity interests and efforts. Once commitments for coalition participation are established, implement planning and prioritization activities in discrete phases timed with concurrent emergency funding requests.

Method/Procedure: Identify and contact key stakeholders and potential funding partners to acquire written commitments for participation in a multi-year ad hoc coalition(s) for post-fire response. Initiate drafting of an intraparty operating agreement that defines the mission, intents, and individual roles and responsibilities of participants. Organize and facilitate initial group discussions that result in a first phase set of prioritized tasks and costs to enable initial implementation funding requests. Utilize technical resources available through the CWCB Watershed Health Engineering Services program for operating agreement input and guidance on designing a first phase response plan.

Candidate partners for the ad hoc coalition that will be contacted include: City of Glenwood, Town of De Beque, BLM, U.S. Forest Service, CPW, Colorado Department of Transportation, NRCS, Bookcliff Conservation District, Bluestone Conservation District, Colorado River District, U.S. Geological Survey, Garfield County, Mesa County, CWCB, Eagle River Watershed Council, RFOV, Shoshone (Xcel), Cameo (Grand Valley Water Users), Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Deliverables:

(for cash request)

- Letters of commitment from participating entities (approx. 20 identified to date)
- Draft operating agreement under consideration by participating entities (draft pursuant to legal review that may take some time to finalize)
- Initial set of prioritized actions and plan for funding requests

Reporting and Final Deliverable

MCWC will provide the CWCB a progress report every 6 months, beginning from the date of the executed contract. The progress report will describe the completion or partial completion of the Actions identified in the statement of work including a description of any major issues that have occurred and any corrective action taken to address these issues.

At completion of the project, MCWC will provide the CWCB a final report that summarizes the project and documents how the project was completed. This report may contain photographs, summaries of meetings and engineering reports/designs.

List of Attachments

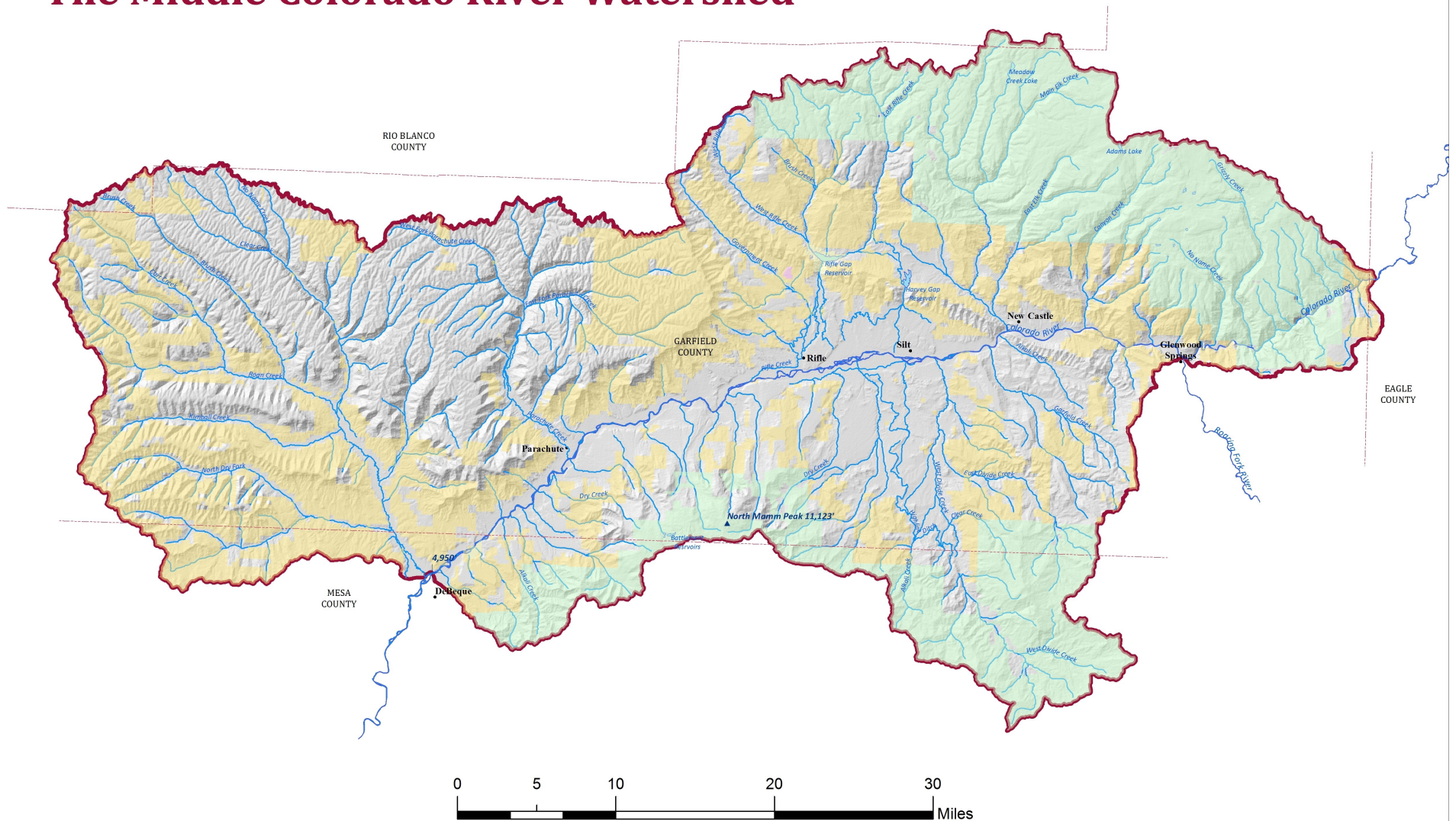
Attachment A – Project Map

Attachment B – Committee and Focus Group Roster

Attachment C – Maps from Silt River Preserve

Attachment D – Letters of Support

The Middle Colorado River Watershed



Attachment B – Committee and Focus Group Roster

IWMP Advisory Committee:

Don Anderson - Upper Colorado River Recovery Program, Hydrologist
Catherine Bacon – Glenwood Springs Utilities and MCWC Board
Kendall Bakich - CPW, Aquatic Biologist
Daniel Becker - Town of New Castle, Utilities Manager
Nathan Bell - Bell Consulting, LLC
Tyler Benton - Colorado Springs Utility
Justin Bilyeu - Shale Tech International
Sheryl Bower - Garfield County Community Development, Director
Abby Burk – Audubon, Western Rivers Program Lead
Kim Burner - Greater Rifle Improvement Team
Anna Cochran - Garfield County Environmental Health
John Currier - Colorado River District, Chief Engineer
Alan Czepinski - BLM, Outdoor Recreation Planner
Dennis Davidson - Mt. Sopris, Bookcliff, South Side Conservation Districts
Sara Dunn – Bookcliff Conservation District
Jared Emmert - City of Rifle Utilities and MCWC Board
Dave Erickson – Aspen Valley Land Trust, Stewardship Director
Angie Fowler – Colorado Basin Roundtable Representative and SGM, Inc.
Tom Fresques - BLM, Aquatic Biologist
Rica Fulton - RiversEdge West
Alex Funk – CWCB, Ag Water Resources Specialist,
Russ George – CWCB Director (now retired)
David Graf - Colorado Parks and Wildlife
James Heath – Colorado Division of Water Resources, Assistant Division Engineer
Annie Henderson - Upper Colorado River Private Boaters Association
Morgan Hill - MCWC Board
Hannah Holm - Hutchins Water Center at Colorado Mesa University
Vince Hooper - Garfield County Community Development
Brian Hopkins - BLM, Recreation Planner
Kay Hopkins – USFS, White River
Trent Hyatt - City of Glenwood Springs Community Development
Hattie Johnson - American Whitewater
Justin Jones – BLM, Recreation Planner
Joe Keys - Jet Boat Colorado, Owner
Kathy Kitzmann - City of Aurora, Homestake Partners
Jojo La – CWCB, Endangered Species Program
Raymond Langstaff - Bookcliff Conservation District
Alan Martellaro – Colorado Division Water Resources – Division Engineer
Stuart McArthur - Town of Parachute, Manager
Caré McInnis – Town of De Beque, Town Administrator
Nate Mohrmann – City of Glenwood, Parks
Joe Mollica - river enthusiast
Ken Neubecker - American Rivers/CBRT Environmental Representative
Danielle Neumann - CPW, Regional Land Use Specialist

Maria Pastore - Colorado Springs Utility, Homestake Project
Jessica Paugh – Town of Parachute, Economic Development and Recreation Specialist
Jim Pokrandt - Colorado River District/IWMP Facilitator
Sam Potter - West Divide Water Conservancy District
Clay Ramey – USFS, White River
Dave Reynolds - Town New Castle, Manager
John Rizza - Western Landowner Alliance
Jeff Roberts - Western Colorado Conservation Corps
Dan Roper - City Glenwood Springs
Brian Rusche - City of Rifle, Planning and Development Department
Angela Ryden - Colorado Farm Bureau
Gail Schwartz – CWCB, Director Colorado River Basin
Brian Smith – City of Glenwood, Parks and Recreation
Paula Stepp - MCWC Board
Chris Sturm -CWCB, IWMP Project Manager
Richard VanGytenbeek - Trout Unlimited
Patrick Waller – Garfield County Community Development
Tom Whitmore -City of Rifle, Parks and Recreation Director
Lyle Whitney - Aurora Water
Cory Williams - USGS
Josh Williams - Garfield County Environmental Health
Ken Ransford - CBRT Recreation Representative
Emily VanBuskirk - GarPit Conservation Districts, District Manager
Doug Winter - MCWC Board

Aquatics Focus Group Attendees:

Kendall Bakich, CPW
Ben Felt, CPW
Tom Fresques, BLM
Davis Graf, CPW
Jenn Logan, CPW
Clay Ramey, USFS
Richard VanGytenbeek, TU

Recreation Focus Group Attendees:

Brian Hopkins, BLM	Ken Neubecker, American Rivers
Kay Hopkins, USFS	Danielle Neumann, CPW
Scott Hoyer, CPW	Jessica Paugh, Town of Parachute
Trent Hyatt, City of Glenwood	Albert Romero, CPW
Hattie Johnson, American Whitewater	Brian Smith, City of Glenwood
Justin Jones, BLM	Paul Smith – Town of New Castle
Joe Keys, Jet Boat Colorado	Richard VanGytenbeek – Trout Unlimited
Stuart McArthur, Town of Parachute	Patrick Waller – Garfield County
Nate Mohrmann, City of Glenwood	Tom Whitmore – City of Rifle
Joe Mollica, recreation enthusiast	
Karstin Moser, City of Glenwood	

Consumptive Use Focus Group Attendees:

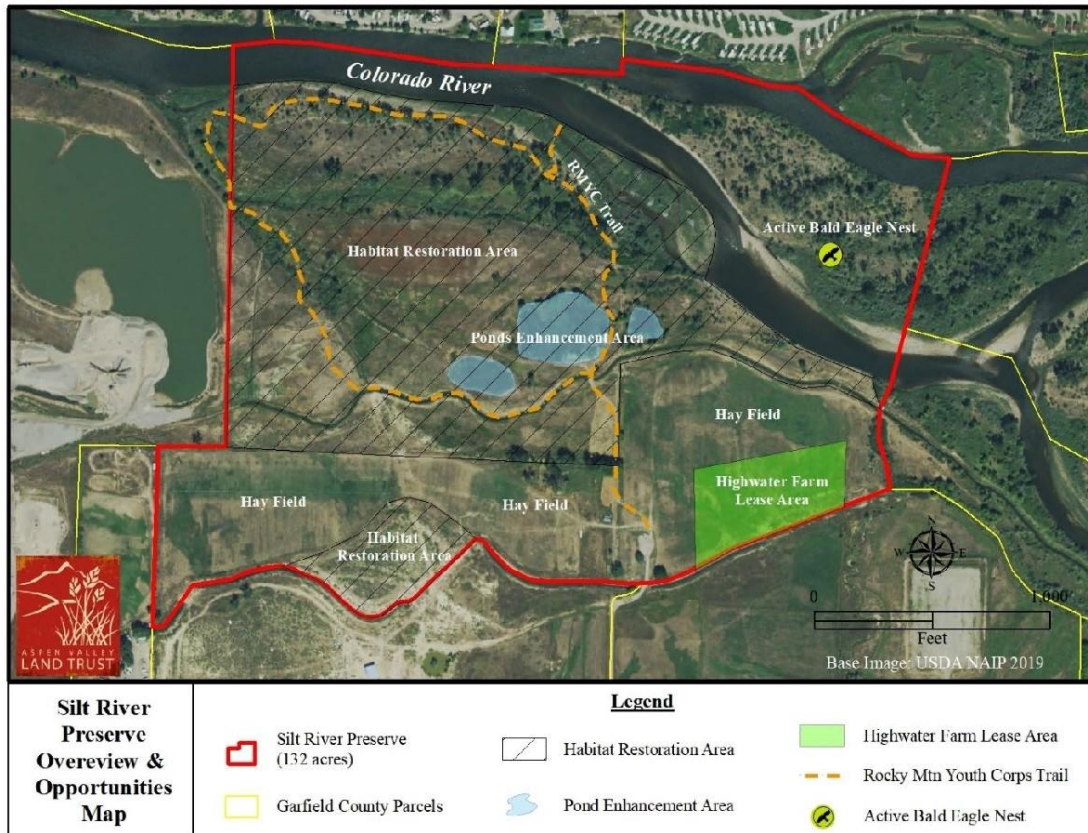
Daniel Becker – Town of New Castle
Nathan Bell – Bell Consulting
Justin Bilyeu – Shale Tech International
Dennis Davidson – GarPit Conservation Districts
Ron Dodd – local ag producer
Sara Dunn – Bookcliff Conservation District
Dave Erickson – Aspen Valley Land Trust
James Heath – Colorado Division Water Resources
Hannah Holm – Colorado Mesa University

Trent Hyatt – City of Glenwood
Raymond Langstaff – Bookcliff Conservation District
Maria Pastore – Colorado Springs Utilities
Jim Pokrandt – Colorado River District
Sam Potter – West Divide Water Conservation District
Brian Rusche – City of Rifle
Richard VanGytenbeek – Trout Unlimited
Patrick Waller – Garfield County
Lyle Whitney – City of Aurora

Water Quality and Riparian Focus Group Attendees:

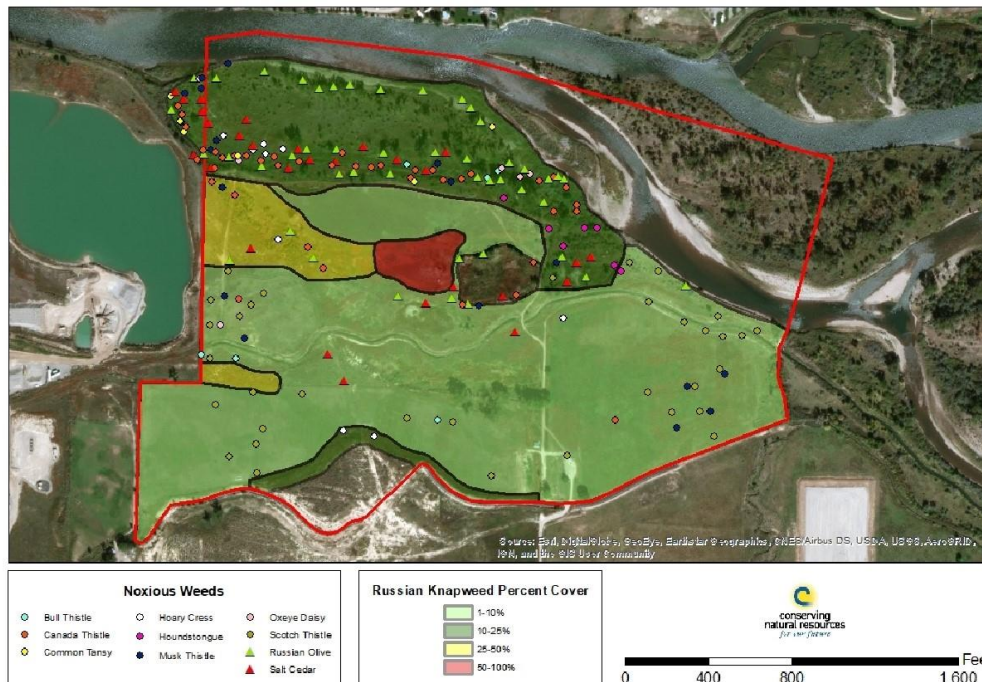
Steve Anders - USGS
Steve Anthony – Garfield County
Abby Burk - Audubon
Anna Cochran – Garfield County
Carla DeYoung - BLM
Jared Emmert – City of Rifle
Dave Erickson – Aspen Valley Land Trust
Angie Fowler - SGM
Tom Fresques - BLM
Rica Fulton – RiversEdge West
David Graf - CPW
Brian Gray - CPW
Sarah LaRose – Garfield County
Bailey Leppek - SGM
Danielle Neumann - CPW
Maria Pastore – Colorado Springs Utility
Clay Ramey - USFS
Jeff Roberts – Western Colorado Conservation Corps
Bob Timberman – USFWS Partners for Wildlife
Wesley Toews - BLM
Richard VanGytenbeek – Trout Unlimited
Josh Williams – Garfield County
Carmia Woolley - BLM

Attachment C – Maps from Silt River Preserve



Silt River Preserve Noxious Weeds

Map: Jonathan Rose, South Side Conservation district
June 2018



Attachment D – Letters of Support

- Aspen Valley Land Trust
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - Colorado Parks and Wildlife
 - Eagle River Watershed Council
 - Garfield County
 - City of Glenwood
 - Highwater Farm
 - Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers
 - Town of Silt
-
- Colorado Basin Roundtable (requested, pending)
 - City of Rifle (requested, pending)



October 22, 2020

Board of Directors

Gary Knaus
President

Jeanne Doremus
Vice-President

Ellen Dube
Secretary

David Chase
Treasurer

Scott Hanley

Amy Daley Krick

Charles Bantis

Curtis Kaufman

Scott Miller

Richard Shaw

Cindi Jacobson

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan Grant Programs

Dear Mr. Sturm,

I am writing on behalf of the Aspen Valley Land Trust (AVLT) to express our strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council (MCWC) application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan grant programs to support implementation of actions identified from the Integrated Water Management Planning (IWMP) effort in the middle Colorado River.

Staff

Suzanne Stephens
Executive Director

Dave Erickson
Stewardship Director

Erin Quinn
Conservation Director

Melissa Sumera
Operations Director

Jeff Davlyn
*Philanthropy and
Community Engagement*

Carly Bolliger
Communications Manager

Brian Hightower
*Education Outreach
Coordinator*

AVLT was very pleased to be a participating entity in the IWMP effort as a member of the Water Quality/Riparian Actions, Recreation Actions, and Consumptive Use Actions focus groups. This was an invaluable process that brought together many stakeholders to address critical issues facing the middle Colorado River watershed. The first set of projects and initiatives being proposed is a welcome move from stakeholder planning into collaborative execution of actions. This is part of a long-term effort to meet the goals and objectives that were collectively identified in the IWMP process.

As a non-profit land trust, AVLT works with landowners and partners from Aspen to De Beque to conserve special places and signature landscapes for wildlife, agriculture, and community. AVLT is particularly interested in the actions being proposed at the Silt River Preserve, a 132-acre property situated along 0.6 miles of the Colorado River, that AVLT helped the Town of Silt acquire and that we hold a perpetual conservation easement on. We are currently working with the Town of Silt, MCWC, and other partners at the preserve on projects to restore critical habitat, support local agricultural production, facilitate educational programs, and provide the community with a place to connect with the river corridor. These actions are directly in line with the recommendations identified through the IWMP process and the Silt River Preserve is the perfect place to demonstrate this work.



AVLT is ready to be engaged and supportive of Middle Colorado Watershed Council's funding application. We recently submitted a grant proposal to Great Outdoors Colorado that includes funding for the projects at the Silt River Preserve listed above. This effort is in direct coordination with MCWC's grant application to the CWCBC and we plan to continue working with MCWC in any capacity we can to implement the goals and objectives identified in the IWMP process.

I urge you to give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application your highest consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Dave Erickson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dave Erickson
Stewardship Director
Aspen Valley Land Trust
970-963-8440
dave@avlt.org



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Northwest Colorado District
2300 River Frontage Road
Silt, Colorado 81652
<https://www.blm.gov/colorado>



In Reply Refer to:

October 27, 2020

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan Grant Programs

Dear Mr. Sturm,

I write to express our support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan grant programs to support implementation of actions identified from the Integrated Water Management Planning effort in the middle Colorado River. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was pleased to be a participating entity in the IWMP as a member of several of the Advisory Committees, including Riparian, Aquatics, and Recreation. The BLM appreciated the opportunity to participate and found the process to be worthwhile in identifying priority actions and projects aimed to improve aquatic systems within the MCWC's jurisdiction and specifically on BLM managed Public Lands. This first set of projects and initiatives is a welcomed move from stakeholder planning into collaborative execution of actions as part of a long-term effort to meet the goals and objectives we collectively identified.

The BLM manages thousands of acres of public lands within the jurisdiction of the MCWC for a multitude of varying uses and the mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The BLM is particularly interested in those projects and actions that benefit public lands but support all the identified projects and actions intended to improve conditions within the larger watershed. These funds, if obtained, could be leveraged with partner funds including BLM dollars, to expand capacity and get more critical work completed.

The BLM is actively engaged with the MCWC and its partners on several projects and has helped fund and provided in-kind support for design work for a needed fish barrier, a rock ramp fish passage project, and assessment of water diversion structures located on BLM managed lands, to name a few. The BLM will continue to support implementation of the IWMP via funding, in-kind contributions, and technical support as resources allow and as implementation of projects and actions move forward.

I urge you to give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application your highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Catherine L. Cook
Acting District Manager,
Northwest and Upper Colorado River Valley Districts
Bureau of Land Management



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Glenwood Springs Service Center
0088 Wildlife Way
Glenwood Springs, Colorado 81601
P 970.947.2920 | F 970.947.2936

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

11/3/2020

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's Grant Applications

Dear Mr. Sturm,

This letter is to express support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's effort to secure grant funding from the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan programs. CPW has a statutory authority to manage all wildlife species in Colorado. This responsibility is embraced and fulfilled through CPW's mission to protect, preserve, enhance, and manage the wildlife of Colorado for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the people of the State and its visitors.

CPW commends the Middle Colorado Watershed Council on their collaborative approach to identify actions—detailed in the Integrated Water Management Plan—which will have positive impacts on the targeted waterbodies. Staff from many different sections (such as aquatics, terrestrial, water, and field staff) consulted on the development of action items. While other stakeholders are leading implementation of the action items, CPW staff will continue to provide support and review on topics that relate to our mission.

For additional information, please contact Regional Land Use Specialist Danielle Neumann at (970) 366-1223 or Regional Water Specialist David Graf at 970-640-8343.

Sincerely,

JT Romatzke,
Regional Manager

Cc. Garrett Watson, Deputy Region Manager
Kirk Oldham, Area Wildlife Manager
Matt Yamashita, Area Wildlife Manager
Lori Martin, NW Senior Aquatic Biologist
David Graf, Regional Water Specialist
Danielle Neumann, Regional Land Use Specialist





461 Railroad Ave, Unit C
PO Box 1477
Gypsum, Colorado 81637

970-827-5406
info@erwc.org
www.erwc.org
Tax ID#: 20-4448864

Advocates for our rivers

Colorado Water Conservation Board
ATTN: Chris Sturm
1313 Sherman St., Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

October 29, 2020

Dear Chris Sturm,

I write to you today on behalf of Eagle River Watershed Council to give our support for the establishment of an ad-hoc coalition (or two) that would address post-fire hazards in the Grizzly Creek and Pine Gulch burn areas, such as flooding and debris flows, which could impact water quality, infrastructure, human life, habitat and more.

Furthermore, we support Middle Colorado Watershed Council (MCWC) in coordinating these coalitions in developing an operating agreement and recovery plan. A number of organizations and entities, including MCWC and ERWC, have already begun meeting in regards to the Grizzly Creek fire recovery. It is currently unclear who is leading the process and there is high potential for critical elements necessary to an effective recovery to be missed. MCWC has the relationships and access to the experts and potential partners most critical to such a recovery.

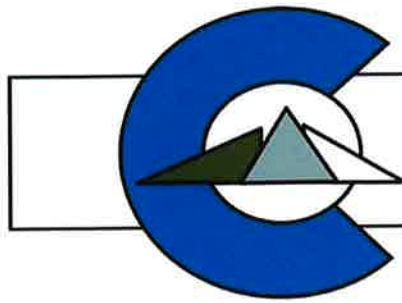
We respectfully encourage CWCB to support MCWC with grant funds for collaborative post-fire watershed management. Eagle River Watershed Council will continue to participate in this collaborative effort.

If you have any questions regarding our support, please contact me directly at loff@erwc.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Holly Loff", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Holly Loff
Executive Director



Garfield County

Community Development Department

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

October 26, 2020

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan Grant Programs

Dear Mr. Sturm,

I write to express strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan grant programs to support implementation of actions identified from the Integrated Water Management Planning effort in the middle Colorado River. Garfield County Community Development Department was pleased to be a participating entity in the IWMP as a member of the Advisory Committee and the Consumptive Use Focus Group and found the process to be engaging, enlightening and thorough. This first set of projects and initiatives is a welcomed move from stakeholder planning into collaborative execution of actions as part of a long-term effort to meet the goals and objectives we collectively identified.

Garfield County Community Development is charged with developing a comprehensive plan to provide guidance on future development in the County. The IWMP process has provided us with critical information on which to base future decision making. We are particularly interested in any future studies/programs that will assist in the County Community Development Department in making sound decisions when it comes to managing our water resources.

Garfield County Community Development is supportive of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's funding application by supporting the group's efforts through providing data and feedback, along with consideration of potential changes to our Land Development regulations as a result of the continuing work the IWMP will be able to accomplish as a result of this funding.

I urge you to give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application your highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Sheryl L. Bower, AICP
Community Development Director

108 Eighth Street, Suite 401
Glenwood Springs, Colorado 81601
(970) 945-8212

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan Grant Programs

Dear Mr. Sturm,

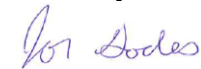
I write to express strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan grant programs to support implementation of actions identified from the Integrated Water Management Planning effort in the middle Colorado River. The City of Glenwood Springs was pleased to be a participating entity in the IWMP as a member of the Advisory Committee. This first set of projects and initiatives is a welcomed move from stakeholder planning into collaborative execution of actions as part of a long-term effort to meet the goals and objectives we collectively identified.

The City of Glenwood Springs is a municipality that depends heavily upon the Colorado River and has more than 10,000 individuals whom it must provide clean drinking water. The City of Glenwood Springs is particularly interested in the joint effort of repairing the watersheds impacted by both the Grizzly Creek and Pine Gulch fires.

The City of Glenwood Springs is ready to be engaged and supportive of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's funding application by providing in-kind resources; any data or feedback that will help inform the work; and dedicating staff time to the overall effort.

I urge you to give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application your highest consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jon Godes'.

Jonathan Godes
Mayor



10/30/2020

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Mr. Sturm,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan grant programs. I am the Director of Highwater Farm, a non profit vegetable farm and youth program located at the Silt River Preserve. Our work is community driven and addresses the need for access to local food, engages youth workers and adult volunteers in sustainable agriculture, and provides locally grown produce to hunger relief efforts.

As a small diversified vegetable farm situated on public open space, we see the very immediate impact of effective water and resource management. We are excited to partner with the Middle Colorado Watershed Council to safeguard our region's access to this finite resource. We established farm infrastructure at the Silt River Preserve in 2020 and have received generous support from many of the community partners involved in this project. Aspen Valley Land Trust, the Town of Silt, and the conservation districts have all put their energy behind our efforts at Highwater Farm and the restoration of the greater Silt River Preserve. We are excited to be a part of this momentous effort to ensure that our watershed sustains healthy ecosystems and lends itself to healthy and thriving communities on the Western Slope. As such, we look forward to furthering access to local food and agriculture, and educating our workers, volunteers and customers about how our work plays into these larger conservation efforts.

We are supportive of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application and are offering a match of \$25,000 in funds raised toward efforts that will directly impact our local food economy and food access while providing valuable job opportunities for young people in the area. Infrastructure projects we will tackle include but are not limited to irrigation upgrades, a shade structure for classes, and hedgerow windbreaks for crops.

Highwater Farm is heavily invested in the outcome of Middle Colorado Watershed Council's efforts because, if funded, they will create a lasting impact on agriculture and food access in the region. We believe that the partnerships already formed in this process ensure that the projects outlined will be executed efficiently and effectively. Change must happen both at the ground and policy level and this council is working hard to ensure that key stakeholders are collaborating to secure a sustainable future for our watershed. Thank you for considering us.

Sincerely,

Sara Tymczyszyn
Director, Highwater Farm

www.highwaterfarm.org
7001 County Road 346, Silt, CO 81652



October 31, 2020

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan Grant Programs

Dear Mr. Sturm,

I write to express strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan grant programs to support implementation of actions identified from the Integrated Water Management Planning effort in the middle Colorado River.

Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers (RFOV) is excited to build a robust partnership with the Middle Colorado Watershed Council to address ongoing restoration efforts in Glenwood Canyon from the Grizzly Creek fire. RFOV has been coordinating and implementing volunteer conservation and restoration efforts in the Roaring Fork and Colorado River Valleys for 25 years. Given the extent of the impact in Glenwood Canyon from the Grizzly Creek fire, RFOV is planning to increase our projects in that area starting next season. Working with partners like MCWC will only enhance our ability to recruit and engage volunteers and multiple stakeholders in these ongoing restoration efforts. RFOV plans to hire an additional field coordinator next season to focus on Glenwood Canyon. We hope that this person will continually collaborate with MCWC's staff to ensure volunteer restoration efforts are organized, coordinated, and engage as many stakeholders as possible. The Colorado Restoration and Colorado Water Plan Grant is pivotal to help them build their capacity to serve our community and watershed.

I urge you to give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application your highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Schild

Associate Director



231 N. 7th Street, PO Box 70, Silt, Colorado 81652
Phone: 970-876-2352

Mr. Chris Sturm
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan Grant Programs

Dear Mr. Sturm,

I write to express strong support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council application to the Colorado Watershed Restoration and Colorado Water Plan grant programs to support implementation of actions identified from the Integrated Water Management Planning effort in the middle Colorado River. The Town of Silt was pleased to be a participating entity in the IWMP as a member of the Advisory Committee, a specific focus group and found the process to be enlightening as to the needs of watershed health and management. This first set of projects and initiatives is a welcomed move from stakeholder planning into collaborative execution of actions as part of a long-term effort to meet the goals and objectives we collectively identified.

The Town of Silt's mission is to *“enhance the quality of life for citizens of the Silt region by providing public facilities and services in a safe, well planned, and sustainable community”*. Silt is particularly interested in this grant's emphasis on water rights evaluation in our area, improvements planned to the boat ramp in the Colorado River and organizing an outreach to the gravel operations in our vicinity.

The Town of Silt is ready to continue in its engagement and support of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's funding application by offering the following: providing cash or in-kind resources; providing any data or feedback that will help inform the work; dedicating staff time, equipment time, or materials that assist with implementation and other assistance as may be appropriate.

I urge you to give the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's application your highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeff Layman
Town Administrator

jlayman@townofsilt.org
970-376-7004